CoC Business & COVID-19 Response

Combined Minutes

Virtual WebEx Meeting

June 19, 2020

Attendance: 43

General Announcements

* Combining CoC Business Meeting with COVID-19 Response Meeting today
* COVID-19 Response Meetings typically take place biweekly on fridays

CoC Funding Round

* All regions to focus on COVID-19 response (safety, recovering and rehousing plans for those who contracted the coronavirus)
  + No anticipated release data for the NOFA
* Local application - new programs have additional questions both required and not required (this can be found online - <https://www.lihomeless.org/coc-nofa>)
* HUD Office Hours every Friday at 2:30PM-4:00PM
  + <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/office-hours-covid-19-planning-response-for-homeless-assistance-providers-fridays/>

Shelter Updates (Suffolk DSS - Commissioner Pierre)

* Staff are back to DSS, those who are able to work from home are still doing so
* All centers are fully operational (never shut down at the start of pandemic)
* SNAP numbers are almost back to normal (June 2020)
* Currently housing 1,948 individuals; 582 singles, 406 families.
  + Concern for right now - numbers are low because evictions are not being served at this point. What is the eviction moratorium going to look like come August?
  + DSS is thinking about reaching out to Suffolk County Sheriff and ask prior to the pandemic, how many people had eviction notices served or prepared to be served? (to determine what that number looks like)
  + COVID folks from the community that we housed thus far = 56 (not in shelter but may be living at home or street homeless and cannot isolate) 15 of the 56 were not eligible to temporary housing assistance
  + Are we prepared for a second wave? DSS is looking to meet with the providers soon - what worked, what didn’t work, etc. (to be proactive instead of reactive)
* What should we be doing in the moratorium before it is lifted? (prevention and ESG)
  + HUD has not released specific guidance on what to do in the moment
    - They are mainly focused on what to do with the ESG-CV funds in regards to homeless prevention. Their messaging has been focused on targeted prevention - a lot of people will encounter evictions but evictions doesn’t always equal homelessness. Therefore, we need to be a little greedy with our ESG funds and make sure it’s going to the folks that would otherwise become homeless (and pair that with some diversion technique).
    - What are the other funding resources and how to make appropriate referrals for 50% or 30% AMI folks?
    - Nationally, folks are trying to guesstimate the amount of folks that will come out of it but we don’t really know because there are landlords that are being generous right now

Updates from Chris P. (ICF Technical Assistance Provider)

* Goal to bring ESG recipients together
* How are we going to strategically use these funds?
  + How can homeless prevention work on LI?
  + What are the best practices?
  + Are we ready for August? (When the eviction moratorium is up)
  + What does each funding stream have available?
  + Biggest fear from HUD - setting up the homeless prevention program and blowing through the ESG-CV money
* We will be talking about racial equity as we move forward

Shelter Updates - Nassau DSS (Lorraine B.)

* Everyone working together on all the funding streams
* Working with Law School and Judges to prepare for the lifting of the evictions
  + If they are already starting the work, we can bring Nassau-Suffolk Law Services involved and work with them to control that
  + The ESG is 14 days - are they going to require that eviction notice?
    - If we are trying to reset the relationship with landlords who rent in NC, and we still make them pay for the cost of the eviction in order to access money, i think that will counter to our RRH folks

Shelter Updates - Nassau (Kevin C.)

* Recap - 2 allocations of COVID funding
* Trying to make final decisions to get money out to the shelters and Homeless Prevention Programs
* 2nd round - working with Chris to identify unmet needs and looking at older ESG funds we have available so we can push out as quickly as possible to those areas of greatest needs
* RRH is a greatest focus for HUD - as Chris mentioned
  + Can we make that work in Nassau County?
  + Learn from best practices and learn from groups who have suggested they can run a program to see how that would actually play out (we want to try and fund it but make sure that it’s going to be successful)
* Homeless Prevention
  + COVID funding allows us to assist tenants with a higher income range - ESG programs with 30% AMI and running that program out of our office and plan to continue doing that. 50% AMI - looking for a non profit provider to help us with that.
  + No timeline for ESG second round
  + Questions related to HP, RRH, and Street Outreach for second round
  + CDBG (more flexibility with homeless services and not directly related to shelter) - received 8 million for covid funding - some will go to assist homeless providers. Most of the funds have gone to:
    - Assist food banks / food distribution services
    - Economic development - for businesses who were shut down and were trying to reopen. (NY Forward Program)
    - Some of that would be for the purchase of PPE
    - Mental health and homeless services (pending application with FQHC to assist with the staffing of nursing at the health centers)
  + Second round for CDBG funding
    - Coming out to local municipalities - has not been announced yet
    - HUD has not issued any guidance on the CDBG funds either other than that the funds have to be used to address covid related expenses
    - Is there more flexibility in the second round? Will it be more of an economic or stimulus type funding or will it be the same rules apply to that?
    - How can these funds be used? Regularly meeting with National Association for County and Town Development and calls with Chris
      * HUD has not been coming out with the guidance
      * Local government/county executive - telling them to move ahead and get the money out, help the businesses, help the residents and that’s our focus too but it’s difficult to do that without clear guidance as to what’s eligible and what’s not
  + Final recommendations on the first round today and approvals next week and send the contracts out

Updates from the Town of Brookhaven - Allison

* Recap: first ESG round that we received - $672,000
* Did get approval for subsequent amendment from HUD, just sent back grant agreement to HUD
  + Hoping to get award letter to ESG recipients either today or Monday
  + Once we do that, then we will proceed with contracts
* Town of Brookhaven received 2.2 million in second round of ESG funds
  + Working with Chris together jointly with Nassau and Suffolk County and figure out how and in the best way we should be spending that money

Updates on Coordinated Entry (LICH - Jess L.)

* Focused on re-examining the CE process and our role in terms of racial equity
* Staff is cautiously meeting with clients
* COVID-19 screenings
* Next Rapid Rehousing Meeting June 25th at 11 AM - discuss challenges, COVID resources, etc.
* CES case conferencing in the near future

Updates on Coordinated Entry (LICH - Mike G.)

* Reassess the DV CES system and our own CES system - making progress
* Discussing how we target additional resources that are coming into the community

Updates on DV Coordinated Entry (TSCLI - Nicole)

* Working closely with TAC to improve overall operations of DV CES
* Past 2-3 weeks - 5 households paired with RRH programs (people are still looking for housing and being paired with programs). Please continue making referrals to the CE team, we are doing everything we can to do assessments, VI-SPDATS, getting them ready, and providing case management to clients on the waitlist.

Updates from CoC Training and Support (LICH - Thanh)

* Racial Equity Committee - Thanh and Edna from LICH are focusing on restructuring the committee and providing more resources
* Keys Conference - survey will be sent out soon to ask what workshops providers will be interested in and for the CoC
* COVID-19 Resources
  + https://www.lihomeless.org/covid-19
* HUD Office Hours every Friday
  + https://www.hudexchange.info/news/office-hours-covid-19-planning-response-for-homeless-assistance-providers-fridays/
* 2 sets of waivers from HUD - CoC and ESG programs that allows for extensions of your contracts and allows for repurposing of those funds
  + Need to submit request and start using that waiver two days after you submit the request (do not need permission from HUD)
  + HUD Waivers: Memo https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Availability-of-Waivers-of-CPD-Grant-Program-and-Consolidated-Plan-Requirements-to-Prevent-the-Spread-of-COVID-19-and-Mitigate-Economic-Impacts-Caused-by-COVID-19.pdf
  + Additional Waivers: https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/Additional\_Waivers\_for\_CPD\_Grant\_Programs\_to\_Prevent\_COVID-19\_Spread\_and\_Mitigate\_COVID-19\_Economic\_Impacts.pdf?utm\_source=HUD+Exchange+Mailing+List&utm\_campaign=0a4b21aecc-COVID-19-Waiver-HOPWA-5.27.20&utm\_medium=email&utm\_term=0\_f32b935a5f-0a4b21aecc-19249601
  + Link to customize waivers: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/covid-19-grant-agreement-amendments/
  + Local field Office email to send waivers: CPD\_COVID-19AmendmentNY@hud.gov

Updates from HMIS (LICH - Wayne)

* HMIS team is now working shorthanded for the next few weeks (please be patient with emails)
* COVID-19 Awareness Screening Tool
  + Easy to use
  + Encourage everyone to use it
  + It will appear as a pop up when you log in
* HMIS New User Trainings
  + Foothold - now using a new training platform that is better
  + Scheduled training for Monday while using new platform - providers better interaction for trainer and trainee
  + July training for new users TBA
* Data Quality
  + If you are having difficulty with project intakes, discharges, etc. please contact Wayne
  + Data quality is important in understanding housing and intervention decisions, etc.
  + ESG-CV funding
    - All projects associated with those grants will need to be entered into HMIS so users have a place to collect the information and we can report on it (coming soon)
    - Set up by individual components (will not change)
  + While you are the subrecipient, you will not need to do the reporting for that (except ESG-CV)
    - HMIS team will do its reporting (quarterly)
    - It is critical that we set up your program right and that you would adhere to the highest data quality standards to make it as easy as possible for the all of us
  + If you have new users that will be working in the esg cv programs and you need training for them, please specify that when you request a new user training (because they will be a priority)